

Via Wireless

Novelized by Thompson Buchanan From the Successful Play of the Same Name By Winchell Smith, Frederic Thompson And Paul Armstrong

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(Continued from Page 8.)

her eyes. Might be penniless but for her father. Well, we will see."

He whirled away from the house where they had been talking and hurried down to the works. Upon reaching them he immediately sent for William Marsh, the head draughtsman.

William Marsh had been with the Durant works since early manhood. His whole life was wrapped up in the place. Unceasing application had raised him to his present responsible and anxious position; but like many another man who gives his life unreservedly to one concern, he had come to find himself in the end ill repaid. To make matters worse his only child, a bright, promising young fellow of twenty, had died as the result of a terrible accident in the chemical room, and the father could not help believing that had Pinckney used proper discretion in selecting the boss of the work the accident might not have occurred.

All this had tended toward a breach between them, only Pinckney was one who cared little for breaches with his employees. He was born to rule and since becoming manager had ridden roughshod over all opposition. Particularly Marsh, fifty years old, spare, physically weak and essentially a dreamer, in love with his own work, was little fitted to cope with the iron-willed manager.

Pinckney was still fuming when the head draughtsman arrived.

"Marsh," he said shortly, "I have decided definitely to push the Rhinestrom gun. I believe it's a great gun and will prove very effective."

"It's all of that," returned the draughtsman shortly. "I think so," agreed the manager, "and we must hurry the work along as fast as possible. By the way, what do you think of this new gun—the Sommers gun that this dandified naval lieutenant is here to have cast?"

Marsh did not know how eagerly the manager was listening for his reply. He paused judiciously a moment, then said hesitatingly:

"I'm sorry, Mr. Pinckney, but from what I can make out it will make a pretty good weapon. The fellow has hit on something new, and it may prove a wonder. Either very good or rotten, that is the way I size it up."

"You mean from the principle on which it is constructed it will either prove a winner or burst and kill a lot of people?" questioned the manager cautiously.

"Exactly," agreed Marsh, "and it will have to be very carefully made or it will burst for sure. We don't want that."

"Then you do not think it is as good a gun as the Rhinestrom gun?" suggested Pinckney.

A dull flush rose in Marsh's pale cheeks. His whole body quivered. It was the anger of a parent whose child had been attacked.

"There isn't any gun as good as the Rhinestrom gun," he cried hotly. "I invented it and I know, and what's more, while we are on the subject, I want to tell you that I think you are doing me a dirty injustice. I have put the best part of my life on that gun, and you have patented it and put a Dutch name on it, and I don't get a cent or any credit."

Pinckney jumped from his chair, his own face red, with anger.

"Look here, Marsh," he cried, "just a little more like that and I'll fire you out of these works! Who do you think you are? Don't you know that we have been paying you a salary for years for your time and your brains? I'll put the name Rhinestrom on that gun or any name I please, and if you don't like it you can get out. There are plenty of men who would be glad to have your job."

But for once the weaker man would not be cowed.

"All right," he cried, "I'll get out! There are other places to work, and all my ideas have not gone yet. And,

money for my life's work. We'll see about this."

He stepped up close, savagely confronting the big manager. Pinckney hesitated. His inclination was to throw Marsh out, but an idea, born of a girl's taunting, was in his mind, and he felt he must temporize. It was bitter to surrender to an employee, but Pinckney was a man who would submit to any number of minor defeats for a big end.

So he forced the best smile he could and held out his hand.

"Forgive me, Marsh," he said. "I am hot tempered, you know, and I have had a great deal to worry me. You have always had a wrong idea of me ever since that unfortunate accident in the chemical room. But every one makes mistakes, Marsh. You know that."

The old man forced down the lump which the mention of "that accident" brought in his throat.

"Mistakes," he said bitterly, "but you don't know how I feel. You can't know. If you'd had a boy who meant to you what that boy meant to me, if he was about all you had to live for and he was blinded as my boy was in an accident caused by the carelessness of a man I had put in charge, then I guess perhaps you'd know. You ask Miss Durant. She was with him when he died—God bless her! Ask her how he suffered. She could understand. Now you know one reason why I am bitter."

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"And you have not consulted a lawyer or anybody about this gun business?" persisted the manager.

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"Well, Marsh, if you had you would realize better what a fool you might have made of yourself. You have worked for this company, and we pay you for your time and your brains. Everything that you do belongs to us. Any lawyer would have told you that. It is legally correct, but not morally right. Now I want to rectify that. I'm going to try to get you something on this gun. Therefore I have patented it under the name of Rhinestrom. Mr. Durant would never consent to pay you any royalty. But he would be willing to pay royalty to a man who does not work for him. Now, if you will trust me I will see if I cannot get a royalty for Rhinestrom and pay it over to you."

A great hope had dawned on Marsh's face.

"You mean you will do that square?" he asked.

"Of course," answered Pinckney, "if we can arrange it. I will draw the royalty for Rhinestrom and pay it over to you. The business must, of course, all be done through me or nothing will come of it. You must trust me."

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Mrs. Pinkham, of Lynn, Mass., invites all sick women to write her for advice. She has guided thousands to health free of charge.

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